



**City of Seattle**  
Seattle Parks and Recreation

Date: December 6, 2011

Dear Community Member,

We heard a lot from the hundreds of you who came out to our 27 October and November public meetings to talk about how to move forward with our community center operations, and a lot of what we heard was great ideas. Thanks for coming to your community center's meeting.

For the northwest geographic group, we heard a lot of emphasis on youth and teen programs, before and after school care, senior programs, programs for families and keeping programs that support themselves. People want us to stop cutting the budget, but that unfortunately is not a realistic option. The community is ready to step up and help with outreach, volunteering, recruiting advisory council members, and looking for new revenue sources. Suggestions included surveying the community, working more closely with schools, and providing volunteer tutors.

In northeast Seattle, priorities are youth and teens, before and after school programs, senior programs, and programs that are self-sustaining. Participants suggested Parks not provide duplicative programs within a geographic area. Community members are willing to do outreach, volunteer, look for fund sources, and join the advisory councils. Participants suggested partnering with local schools and holding regular combined advisory council meetings within the geographic group.

At the meeting for central community centers, the emphasis is on youth and teens, seniors, before and after school programs, and programs that support themselves. This group also suggested not duplicating programs within the geographic area and trying to avoid staff turnover. The participants expressed willingness to do outreach, look for fund sources, volunteer, join an advisory council and establish partnerships with schools. A unique suggestion from this group is to create a community center foundation to help support community center operations.

In West Seattle, the order of priority is youth and teens, seniors, before and after school programs, and programs that are self-sustaining. This group also suggested avoiding duplication in programming within the geographic area and expressed a willingness to do outreach, use the center more, volunteer, and serve on an advisory council.

**Central Geographic Team - Community Center specific priority highlights:**

Garfield

- Senior and lifelong learning programs, computer programs/classes, intergenerational programs, community outreach, teen programs and outreach to trouble youth, childcare, fitness/nutrition/health programs, increasing business and private partnerships, focus on successful programs, tutorial programs.

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#### Montlake

- Sustain existing programs, reproduce successful programs offered at other community centers, mentorships, site and community specific programs, increased use of volunteers, fundraising.

#### Queen Anne

- Senior and lifelong learning programs, before and after school programs for youth and teens, continuing successful programs, increasing marketing, early morning access for weight room/aerobics, community basketball, family and intergenerational programs.

#### Yesler

- Partnerships, SYVPI, SYEP, YES, 20-14/SHA redevelopment program, family and youth programming, childcare, community events, intergenerational programs, tutoring and homework assistance, computer lab, language classes, food/fitness programs, lifelong learning.

#### Miller

- Intergenerational programs, special events, additional community center hours, arts programs for all ages, fitness/active programs, senior and lifelong learning programs, health/wellness classes, prioritizing programs based on community needs/demand.

These trends emerged from the notes across the city:

- A desire to lobby the City Council to restore hours and avoid budget cuts. While this is every citizen's right and very understandable, it unfortunately does not acknowledge the reality in which we find ourselves.
- A desire to vary the programming at the centers within each geographic area so that there are as few duplications as possible.
- A desire to work more closely with local neighborhood schools and PTAs to create partnerships, get information out about programs, and involve more parents.
- A desire to take advantage of "natural" partnerships waiting to happen, e.g., with Neighborhood House at High Point Community Center and between centers and the new ropes challenge course at Camp Long.
- A desire for more outreach using social media, email lists, local blogs, and other tools, while keeping the digital divide in mind and addressing it.

Possibly most heartening of the trends is people's willingness to roll up their sleeves and volunteer in many different areas from helping put on special events to tutoring in areas where volunteers have expertise.

We look forward to the next steps in planning programming and operations in your geographic group, and to implementing your great ideas. To keep up with progress on implementation of the new model, please check in any time at <http://seattle.gov/parks/centers/operations.htm>.

Sincerely,



Christopher Williams